

T. H. Johnson Elementary School



"Growing hearts, growing minds, growing community"

Parent/Student Handbook 2019-2020

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Jenni Cork, Principal
Andy Basche, Assistant Principal
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Welcome to T.H. Johnson Elementary!

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the 2019-2020 school year! We hope the following information will be helpful as your child starts his or her school career. There is more information in the District Student/Parent Handbook located on the district website.

Thank you for being part of our team here at T.H. Johnson Elementary. We look forward to building strong partnerships with our students, parent, guardians, and community members. We encourage you to join our Parent Teacher Organization and to volunteer on our campus. Please feel free to contact us for more information about how to become a partner at THJ.

Sincerely,
Jenni Cork, Principal

GRADES PK-3, PRE-K AND KINDERGARTEN

DAILY SCHEDULE

7:15-7:40 a.m..... Arrival
7:40 a.m. School Starts
3:10 p.m. Dismissal

ATTENDANCE

Once a student is enrolled in PK-3, Pre-K, or Kindergarten, attendance is mandatory and state laws do apply. If your child is absent, you must send a note to school the following day that describes the reason for the absence. We will only accept three parent notes each semester. If your child is absent due to a doctor's visit, please send the excuse from the doctor's office. A student who is absent 3 or more days must bring an excuse from the doctor.

A student who is not in the building before 7:40 am will be counted tardy. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action, in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct.

Students who are checked out from school before the end of the school day will be marked as leaving early in the attendance recording system. A student may not receive a Perfect Attendance award or be eligible for attendance incentives if he/she is tardy and/or has left school early more than 3 times combined in a nine week period, or has an excused or unexcused absence.

Please refer to the Taylor ISD Parent and Student handbook for a detailed explanation of Absences and Attendance.

AWARDS AND HONORS

T.H. Johnson Elementary will have award recognitions at the end of each nine weeks. Awards will also be given for Perfect Attendance each nine weeks and at the end of the school year. Parents will be notified by the teacher when these recognitions will occur.

BACKPACKS

Backpacks must be of appropriate size (proportionate to the student and able to fit a student take home folder). Please do not send "string" backpacks or backpacks with wheels.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS AND DISCIPLINE

We believe that all students can reach their full potential by being responsible, cooperative, and respectful to all. Their choices will reflect pride in self, the welfare of others, school and the community. T.H. Johnson will follow the Taylor ISD Student/Parent Handbook and Student Code of Conduct for discipline management. At THJ, we are Growing Leaders by using the "7 Habits of Happy Kids" by Sean Covey and foster leadership in each child. We encourage parents and caretakers to research more about the "7 Habits of Happy Kids" and continue that learning at home.

We teach behavior expectations on a daily basis. This includes reminding students of the expectations and modeling the appropriate behavior.

Should a student show difficulty in learning the proper behaviors, the teacher will work with that student to correct the behavior. If the misbehavior is persistent, the teacher will notify the parents either in writing or by phone to discuss a solution. The teacher may also assign consequences for the misbehavior which may include, but are not limited to: teacher, parent, and student conference; warning; time-out or time in the classroom cool down area; withdrawal of privileges; seating change in the classroom; apology; cleaning up the affected area; or other appropriate intervention steps.

Should misbehavior become more persistent or severe, the teacher will involve an administrator. In these cases, the administrator will provide additional interventions which may include, but are not limited to: assistance in the classroom with the student behavior; private conference with the student; administrator and parent conference; involvement with the behavior specialist; referral to the office; time-out outside of the classroom; cool down time outside the classroom; behavior contract; withdrawal of privileges; assignment to ISS; or other consequences deemed appropriate by the administrator. The administrator will contact the parent about the interventions or consequences provided.

CAMPUS VISITORS

Parents and others are welcome to visit T.H. Johnson. For campus safety, all visitors must enter through the front main doors and first report directly to the front office to be identified and sign in. Visitors will be asked to present identification (ID must be accepted by the information system) that will be entered into a computer-based information system. The system will generate a name badge that must be worn in plain sight while on campus property. Visitors are only permitted in the designated area established at the time of check in. When visitors leave campus, they must sign out in the front office and leave the name badge in the appropriate book. All campus visitors are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of courtesy and conduct; disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and any visitor behaving in an inappropriate manner will be asked to leave campus. Visitors without proper identification will not be allowed on campus.

Siblings enrolled at other schools cannot attend events on THJ campus during the school day. This includes lunches, parties, ceremonies, or social events. Students must remain in class at their assigned campus.

CLASS PARTIES / CELEBRATIONS

Parents who wish to celebrate their child's birthday at school need to make arrangements with the teacher in advance. Celebrations are typically held in the afternoon, preferably after 2:00. Food items brought to school need to be store-bought. No homemade food items will be allowed.

Organized class parties can be held three times during the year: Winter, Valentine's Day, and End of Year. The teacher will request parent volunteers to provide food for those parties. Food allergies of anyone in the class will be considered.

District and school rules apply to all school social events. Guests attending these events are expected to observe the same rules as students, and a student/parent inviting a guest will share responsibility for the conduct of his or her guest. All visitors will need to follow Campus Visitor procedures. A parent wishing to check out their child for the day, after a school event, will be asked to present proper ID and sign them out on the appropriate form in the front office. Please refer to the Taylor ISD Student/Parent Handbook for details about celebrations during the school day. Personal party invitations can only be handed out to students if all students in the class receive an invitation.

CLASSROOM VISITS

Parents wanting to visit their child's classroom must call or email the teacher to schedule an appointment at least 24 hours in advance. Visit requests are permitted only with the approval of the teacher and the principal. All visitors must follow the Campus Visitor procedures as stated in this handbook. Classroom visits are limited to 45 minutes and only in the designated area to minimize the interference with the delivery of instruction or disrupt the normal school environment. Please see the CAMPUS VISITORS section of this handbook for more information.

CUSTODIAL OR VISITATION DOCUMENTATION

If there is legal custodial or visitation documentation affecting the parental/adult access to a child on campus, you must provide a copy of the legal documentation to the office and speak with a THJ office staff member in reference to the terms of the documentation.

DELIVERIES TO STUDENTS

Deliveries of balloons, flowers, etc. for students will be accepted at the office to ensure the least interruptions to the instructional process/classroom. Some items may not be permitted in classrooms and/or on buses if they present a safety concern or will be an interruption to the instructional/classroom/transportation process. If you are planning such deliveries, please call and make arrangements with your child's teacher. Please remember before delivering these items that it is very difficult for students to carry such items home.

DRESS AND GROOMING

All TISD students must follow the dress code for each campus. Students attending T.H. Johnson are actively engaged in hands on learning experiences, recess, P.E., and other physical activities. It is recommended that students wear

comfortable clothes while at school that allow for movement and that are weather appropriate. Students should wear tennis shoes with a closed toe, preferably with Velcro closures rather than shoelaces, unless they can independently tie their shoelaces. Tennis shoes will allow students to participate safely in daily activities. Students also spend time using paint, markers, natural materials and a variety of other materials that can often stain their clothes. If a student's clothes are in violation of the TISD dress code or deemed inappropriate by an administrator, parents will be notified to bring the student a change of clothes. Parents will always be notified in advance of field trips, picture days or special occasions so that children can dress accordingly.

Parents are encouraged to keep a change of clothing in their child's backpack at all times. Accidents happen and students need to be able to change clothes. Please make sure the change of clothing is updated regularly.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES, INCLUDING CELL PHONES

The student shall not have a telecommunications device, including a cellular telephone, or other electronic devices in violation of district and campus rules. Please see the Taylor ISD Student/Parent Handbook for more information.

GRADING GUIDELINES - PK AND KINDERGARTEN

Students will receive a report card at the end of each nine weeks. The report card for PK-3 is based on the Three-Year-Old Early Learning Guidelines. The report card for Pre-K is based on the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines. The report card for Kindergarten is based on the Kindergarten TEKS.

Please refer to the Taylor ISD Parent and Student handbook for a detailed explanation of Grading Guidelines. For information regarding Promotion and Retention, see the Promotion and Retention section of this Handbook.

HOMEWORK

Homework is intended to help review, reinforce and practice what has already been introduced in the classroom. Young children will develop good study habits and improve skills by completing homework assignments that are brief and skill-specific. Daily reading at home is required and will also help your child gain the early literacy skills needed to become an avid reader. If you have questions regarding your child's homework, please contact their teacher.

LUNCH

For student safety, parents may only provide food to eat with his/her student. Parents may only eat with their own child. No student guests are allowed at the Parent Visitor tables. Labeled tables are designated in the cafeteria for lunch visitors.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

In Kindergarten and 1st Grade, promotion to the next grade level shall be based on standards-based assessments rather than numerical scores. If the assessment standard is not met, the teacher shall consult with the counselor, principal, and parent in formulating a recommendation for retention. If no consensus is reached, the decision regarding academic retention, shall be made by the principal.

Promotion/Retention in Kindergarten and 1st Grade

The report card for Kindergarten and 1st Grade is a standards-based continuum derived directly from the TEKS. A student's performance is assessed as:

- Level 1 - Exhibits skill/concept significantly below grade level
- Level 2 - Exhibits skill/concept slightly below grade level
- Level 3 - Exhibits skill/concept meeting grade level expectation
- Level 4 - Exhibits skill/concept above grade level expectation

A student shall be promoted if his or her final report card reflects the following:

1. Is marked at or above grade level in reading denoting no more than three indicators below a Level 3 in Kindergarten and no more than two indicators below a Level 3 in 1st.

2. Is marked at or above grade level in writing denoting no more than two indicators below a Level 3.
3. Is marked at or above grade level in mathematics denoting no more than three indicators below a Level 3 in Kindergarten, and no more than four indicators below a Level 3 in 1st Grade.
4. Is marked at or above grade level in social studies and science denoting no more than three indicators below a Level 3 throughout all four grading periods.

Promotion/Retention in 2nd and 3rd Grade

Promotion to the next grade level shall be based on an overall average of 70 on a scale of 100 based on course level, grade level standards for all subject areas and a grade of 70 or above in three of the following areas: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science or Social Studies.

RELEASE OF STUDENTS FROM SCHOOL

Please refer to the Taylor ISD Student/Parent Handbook for a detailed explanation of Absences and Attendance. Because classroom instruction is very important, doctor's appointments should be scheduled at times when the student will not miss instructional time. For student and campus safety, a student who needs to leave school during the day must leave campus before dismissal procedures begin and follow the campus sign in/out procedures before leaving the campus. Any person signing out a student from campus must have the appropriate permission and a valid ID to present to the THJ office staff. If a student becomes ill during the school day, the nurse will decide whether or not the student should be sent home and will notify the student's parent.

A written note (hand written, fax, email) is required to change the way that your child goes home at the end of the day. We will not accept changes over the telephone or after 2:00pm, as we have no way to determine the identity of the caller and must have time to get the message to the teacher. Any time there is a question about the identity of a caller or person attempting to sign out a student, parents will be called immediately to verify the information.

For changes in bus transportation, the parent must provide in writing: the bus number, the exact bus stop location, and the full name of the person picking up the child at the stop. Frequent bus transportation changes are not acceptable.

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are welcome to visit the T.H. Johnson campus and to assist where the principal deems appropriate, once they have been approved through TISD volunteer process. Criminal background checks are required for all potential TISD volunteers (including PTO) and must be completed each school year. Volunteer applications can be found on the Taylor ISD website or in the T.H. Johnson front office. Completed TISD volunteer applications must be accompanied with a copy of your driver's license and can be turned into the TISD Central Office or THJ front office.

We invite you to participate in the T.H. Johnson Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), which actively promotes volunteerism on behalf of students and staff. Feel free to contact the office staff for campus volunteer opportunities at (512) 352-2275 for more information.

STUDENT SCHEDULES

THJ does not accept teacher requests from parents. However, if you have concerns, please email the principal with a brief description of your child (personality, characteristics, school history, etc.) so that we may do our best to match them with a learning environment that will best meet their learning needs. Also, THJ is often the first campus where our students get their first school experience. A huge part of the Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten experience is learning how to be a positive school community member. An important contributing factor to this experience is making sure students are placed in the most beneficial setting/classroom that will allow them to meet campus expectations, do their best, and reach their full potential. At any point during the school year, THJ administration can determine if a change in the setting/classroom is necessary for student success. If a change in the setting/classroom is needed, parents will be notified of the change in a timely manner.

TOYS and VALUABLES

Please do not allow your child to bring toys or valuable items to school except for special events and with teacher permission. Teachers will notify parents of any special events permitting toys. Toys brought without permission will be confiscated, and parents will be required to pick them up from the front office or the teacher. They will not be sent home with the student.

TRAFFIC ON CAMPUS

Vehicles on school property shall adhere to the following procedures. Parking is not permitted in fire lanes (red curb) at any time. Parking is not permitted in bus lanes (yellow curb) during arrival and dismissal at any time. Parents may park in the front parking lot or on TH Johnson Drive when visiting for lunch.

Illegal parking and moving of barricades is prohibited.

Laws regarding School Zones:

- In school zones, it is now a statewide law that unless the vehicle is stopped, or a handsfree device is used, drivers may not operate cell phones.
- All occupants in passenger vehicles must wear a seatbelt while a motor vehicle is being operated, not just the driver and front-seat passengers.
- Children under the age of 8 or smaller than 4 foot, 9 inches in height must be secured in a proper child safety seat.

Drop-Off:

- The entrance to the student drop-off line (automobile) on the West side of the building is located at the 4-way stop on TH Johnson Drive. Cars will form two lines that will merge into one on the far side of the parking lot near the gym. Please be courteous and alternate vehicles as the lines merge.
- Parents may drop off their children in the student drop-off line (follow the arrows on the map). Please remain in your car during arrival and dismissal. Staff members will be available to assist with getting students in and out of the car until 7:40 am. We recommend parents arrive early in order to get through the line before the tardy bell rings. Students must be in the building before the bell rings. Being in line does not excuse tardiness.
- Parents should not park in the Staff parking lot to walk their child across the driveway to the school. This is dangerous and will not be permitted.
- Another drop-off option is available at the front entrance of THJ. Parents need to park either on TH Johnson Drive or in the front parking lot and walk students to the front entrance doors. Please do not pull through or park in the bus loop before 8:00 am or after 2:00 pm.
- Doors open and students may enter the building at 7:15 a.m. Breakfast is served in the classrooms from 7:40-8:00 am.

Pick-Up:

- Dismissal begins at 3:10. Students who are not picked up by 3:25 will be escorted to office and will need to be signed out by a parent.
- The entrance to the student pick-up line (same as the drop-off line) is located at the 4-way stop on TH Johnson Drive.
- Please remain in your car, in your place in line, and follow the pick-up line. Please do not try to pass a car in front of you. Staff members will be available to assist with getting students in and out of the car.
- Cars must display the official school car rider sign with teacher and student name for pick up. Signs are available at Meet the Teacher night, in the office, or can be requested from your child's teacher.
- Walkers: Once a parent has completed the walker form and returned it to the teacher, a student may be identified as a "walker." Parents who walk to pick up students **must** park either on TH Johnson Drive (this is the easiest for accessibility) or in the front parking area adjacent to TH Johnson Drive. Walkers will be released on the North side of campus and parents or designees will be required to present the official school walker sign to the staff member on duty. Signs are available at Meet the Teacher night, in the office, or can be requested from

your child's teacher.

Buses and Visitor Parking:

- The bus and visitor parking entrance is located east of the 4-way stop on TH Johnson Drive. Visitor parking in the bus loop by the building is available from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. Visitor parking in the parking lot before the bus loop is available from 7:15 am - 4:00 pm. The bus loop will be closed to traffic from 7:00-8:00 am and 2:00-3:30 pm except for buses and daycare vehicles. Follow signs posted in the parking lot.
- Visitors using the parking lot must use designated parking spaces. For safety reasons, do not park along the red curb or yellow curb of the driveway.

General:

- Should you need to pick your child up early for an appointment, please arrange to do so before 2:00 pm. After 2:00, parents must follow regular dismissal procedures.
- Reminder – Picking up your child early (even a few minutes) counts against their attendance records.
- Parents wishing to go inside the building at any time must go to the office, present your valid ID and receive a visitor tag.

*****More information about these and additional subjects can be found in the Taylor ISD Parent/Student Handbook and Student Code of Conduct. All handbooks and the code of conduct can be accessed on the Taylor ISD website and/or requested in the front office.**